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Golden Islands

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The **Golden Islands**, also known as **Altın Adalar** (Ofiri: *Islands of Gold*), **Jüld Insi** (Nilfgaardian: *Golden Islands*), **Jazur Muneazila** (Barsameni: *The Isolated Islands*), **Plebiloltaman** as they are called by many of their native inhabitants (Juldian: *The Place of a Thousand People*), among many other names, are a group of tropical islands located midway between the southernmost territories of the Nilfgaardian Empire and Ofir, which for centuries have been disputed by both powers.

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Golden Islands

General information	
Variation(s)	Altın Adalar (by the Ofieris) Jüld Insi (by the Nilfgaardian) Plebiloltaman (most popular native name)
Status	Divided among different states
Ruler	Varied. The most popular form of government is monarchy in its various forms
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Official Language	None. It depends on the area of a particular island you go to
Demonym	Varied. The most popular demonym used by foreigners is goldenese
Religion	Varied. Although foreigners group all the different religions under the umbrella of Goldenese beliefs

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Borders

The islands do not share any borders with external territories beyond the limits of the archipelago itself, due to their divided control and the fact that they lie very close to one another. They are located in the Great Sea, more specifically halfway between the Nilfgaardian prefecture of Baccalà and southern Ofir, positioned slightly below the latitude of the island of Basilia to the west.

Coat of Arms

Because the islands have never been a unified territory, they have never

possessed an official coat of arms of their own. The closest equivalent is the emblem used by emissaries from the central islands when their various governments form alliances in order to interact with the territories controlled by Ofir and Nilfgaard on roughly equal terms.

This emblem consists of an oval shield with a light-blue interior and marine motifs along the outer border. The border features blue and yellow colors: the blue represents the characteristic waters of the region, while the yellow symbolizes the insular nature of the alliance and the idea of defense, a meaning commonly associated with that color in the dominant local cultures. The light-blue interior represents peace through unity within the alliance, echoing the symbolism attributed to yellow, and at the center stands a gold ingot—an obvious reference to the islands' wealth, as well as a subtle provocation meant to convey parity with the two powers that control the north and south and gave the archipelago the name by which it is known abroad: the Golden Islands.

Culture

Overview

Much like in Melukka, it is impossible to define a single overarching culture for the Golden Islands. The only certainty is the recurrence of certain patterns in specific aspects of life — and even then, always with internal variation. In the islands controlled by Nilfgaard and Ofir, the cultures of both powers have exerted a notable influence, though rather than homogenizing the local societies, they have instead blended with them, giving rise to new syncretic traditions.

Accents

When speaking Ofiri, Nilfgaardian, or any of the major island languages, many locals can tell where someone comes from — and even which society they belong to — simply by their accent. This is due to the immense linguistic diversity of the archipelago, which has led to strong phonetic associations.

Additionally, as in many maritime regions, the phenomenon known as the port accent is widespread: a distinctive way of speaking formed from the blending of numerous accents, typically emerging in major harbor cities.

Art

Art in all its forms exists throughout the Golden Islands, with each society independent from Nilfgaard and Ofir prioritizing one form over another based on the resources available to them. It is impossible to identify a single artistic expression as more popular than the others due to the archipelago's complexity. The only one widely recognized by foreigners — and therefore seemingly the most prominent — is goldsmithing.

Colors

In many Golden Islands societies, colors that on the western coast are considered "*feminine*" or "*masculine*" are perceived in the opposite way. For example, pink is regarded as highly masculine (with each society offering its own explanations as to why), while blue is seen as highly feminine (again, with varying cultural justifications).

In some cultures, men engaged in violence-related professions dye their hair pink to signal their occupation without needing to explain it, and the same occurs with women in roles connected to motherhood, though using blue. The intensity of the pink shade indicates the specific type of profession (the more intense, the less violent), while for women the deeper the blue, the more closely tied it is to maternal roles.

It should also be noted that beyond these two examples, there are many other cases of people dyeing their hair to indicate profession or, in certain societies, social status. Given how widespread this practice is, it likely originated as an efficient form of communication that avoided the need for intermediaries in such a linguistically complex archipelago.

Diet

The only general statement that can be made about the diets across the various island societies is that there is a greater tendency to consume poultry products — especially from large domesticated birds — rather than mammals, since birds have a higher chance of surviving predator attacks. Fish is also widely eaten, along with large amounts of fruit, as the islands produce varieties not found elsewhere; these fruits often fulfill the nutritional role that legumes or tubers serve outside the archipelago.

Coming of Age

In most islands cultures, the age of majority tends to be relatively late, usually around twenty-five to thirty years old on average. This likely stems from the harsh environment early human settlers faced after their arrival, encouraging societies to ensure that sons and daughters were fully prepared to survive once their parents were no longer present. Some scholars also suggest that lingering elven influence may have contributed to this later threshold of adulthood.

Currencies

Multiple currencies circulate throughout the islands. However, Imperial florens hold the highest value, followed by Ofiri shekels. Another currency of notable importance, ranking third, is the coinage of the island-kingdom of Namelwara, the haphap (literally, *fragment*), forged from dark iron and gold. It is easily recognizable not only by its design but also by its appearance — resembling "*very dim gold, almost black.*"

Other currencies, such as the coin of the kingdom of Emtinambis, the senis (literally, *exchange)*, tend to have either strictly insular circulation or a limited inter-island reach, usually confined to two or three islands.

Education

Access to education, how it is delivered, and the reasons behind it vary enormously, as with so many other aspects of the islands. The only certainty is that in the Ofiri and Imperial territories, the same educational structures found on the mainland are applied.

In the alioisonomic societies so prevalent across the archipelago, education falls under the responsibility of the nobility — in fact, it is considered one of their core obligations toward the other fluid estates.

Discrimination

Across most islands cultures, discrimination is generally less focused on race itself and more on whether an individual is capable of adapting to the local culture. This likely stems from the highly multiethnic origins of the islands' ancestors. As a result, with the exception of the territories controlled by Nilfgaard and Ofir — where their own discriminatory norms have taken root — prejudice against non-humans is largely absent, and xenophobia at first contact is uncommon. Long-term xenophobia may emerge, however, if someone fails to

integrate, as well as conquest-driven hostility in islands located closer to Nilfgaardian and Ofiri domains.

Gastronomy

Due to the abundance of metals in the territory, frying is a common cooking method. For this purpose, oils are primarily used, often produced from the region's unique fruits. Cooking is typically done in what foreigners refer to as "*cauldron-pans*" — a type of double-handled pan with wide, upward-curving edges, almost dome-like, designed to prevent excessive oil splatter, hence the name.

Because of the distinctive fruit-based oils employed, the cuisine is often described as having a characteristic sweet-salty flavor profile.

Great Norms

Unlike in many other regions, the extreme diversity of the islands has given rise — particularly in border territories — to the phenomenon known as the Great Norms.

Under this system, two neighboring territories belonging to different states agree to uphold certain laws of the adjacent country, even when those laws may disadvantage them. The purpose is to reduce friction and preserve peace as much as possible.

In essence, it is a form of mutual legal concession born not from idealism, but from the practical understanding that coexistence in such a fragmented archipelago requires compromise.

Justice

Each country within the archipelago has its own distinct way of administering justice. In territories controlled by Nilfgaard and Ofir, the legal systems of those respective states are applied, as expected.

Among the independent island states, however, a different pattern appears. In many of them, justice operates through a system of psychological coercion, where imprisonment plays only a minor role. Instead, the convicted individual is subjected to intense and sustained social pressure. This pressure often leads to one of three outcomes: voluntary exile, suicide, or acceptance of guilt followed

by a gradual process of overcompensation.

In the latter case, the individual performs increasingly significant acts of selfless, positive contribution to the community. Over time, these actions are considered to outweigh the original crime. Once the social balance is perceived as restored, the communal pressure ceases, and the individual is reintegrated into normal life.

The severity of this psychological coercion — and the consequences it can bring — serves as a powerful deterrent, making repeat offenses exceedingly rare.

Magic

Magic in the Golden Islands is primarily the domain of mages and of the actual islands equivalent of druids, known by many names, among them lukimman (Juldian: *Watcher* — not to be confused with the mysterious race referred to by the Nordlings as Watchers). These two professions coexist in relative balance, despite mages being a later foreign influence introduced through the Ofiri and the Imperials.

In many island states, mages act as the ruler's right hand, overseeing matters that pertain strictly to the human sphere — politics, warfare, infrastructure, arcane theory. The lukimman, by contrast, serve as the left hand, dealing with domains that lie beyond purely human concerns, or in which excessive human intervention could bring disaster.

Like elsewhere in the world, mages are trained in academies — and so are the lukimman. However, they are not druids in the traditional sense. Their role resembles that of nature-experts with magical aptitude, whose purpose is not to preserve nature untouched, but to monitor and regulate it so that humanity's worst impulses do not destroy it, and so that exploitation may continue sustainably. They seek a form of symbiosis rather than strict conservation.

In fact, it was largely through the influence of the lukimman that one of the earliest recorded concepts of recycling in the world emerged in the islands.

This does not mean that the region never possessed something nearly identical to druids. It did. They were known as the prennetsaman (Juldian: *Friends of Nature*). However, with the arrival of the Barsameni, their role lost so much influence that the profession nearly vanished, surviving only within very isolated communities.

There also once existed a hybrid profession — something between witcher and mage — which, alongside other magical vocations, was trained in academies.

They more closely resembled what the Order of Witchers originally intended to create: knight-mages. Known by various names, among them agensimnarakai (Juldian: *Against the Strange*), they were in many ways more powerful in raw magical capacity.

However, Nilfgaard's arrival and the conquest of the northern islands attracted curious witchers to the region. Although witchers could not match the power of an agensimnarakai, they ultimately proved far more effective against the archipelago's monsters. Over time, this relegated the agensimnarakai to a declining profession — much like the fate witchers themselves would later face in the Old Continent, until the Second Conjunction once again made them necessary.

The agensimnarakai, however, did not share that resurgence. By the 14th century, they had become little more than local history.

Marriage

In contrast to the relatively late age of majority, marriage in many island societies tends to occur at a young age, typically between individuals of similar age — never between an adult and someone significantly younger.

In many cases, marriages are arranged by the parents of both families and structured so that the couple quickly has children, ensuring a legacy in case something happens to them in the archipelago's harsh environment. As a result, these marriages often end in divorce once both parties reach the age of majority and have had at least two children.

Mentality

It is impossible to define a single mindset for the people of the islands due to their strong ethnic and cultural divisions. However, from an outsider's perspective, many Goldenese are stereotyped as boisterous, flamboyant, and greedy — even more so than the Toussaintois — while also being notably open-minded. At the same time, they are said to possess such a strong sense of justice and of what is right or wrong that it becomes nearly impossible to sway their opinion once it is formed, especially in matters that involve negotiation.

This stereotype likely originates from the historical need to "*mark territory,*" both among the different island states themselves and when dealing with more powerful nations beyond the archipelago.

Religion(s)

For more information on the various religions of the Golden Islands, see Category: Religions of the Golden Islands

The religious landscape of the islands is as diverse as their languages, making it impossible to cover every belief system. However, as with many other aspects of the archipelago, it is possible to speak not of shared patterns, but of recurring types.

These include syncretic religions shaped by foreign influence; polytheistic traditions; animist faiths; and animonotheistic beliefs (that is, systems where everything possesses spirits that are fragments of a single superior being who is the only true god). In the past, with the arrival of the Bukhali, cargo cults emerged, which over time evolved into materialist cults in the present day — religions that believe the accumulation of wealth and its use in honoring the deity or deities brings one closer to them in life and allows ascension to divinity after death.

There are also religion-philosophies (faiths with metaphysical but non-divine components), anthroporeligions (belief systems where the mortal element is primary yet the divine still exists in a secondary role — not to be confused with religion-philosophies or secular systems), entheogenic religions, and staurosist traditions (religions that possess divine aspects but lack metaphysical ones).

Slavery

Slavery is both common and highly variable across the islands. In such a hostile environment — especially during the early periods — enslaving captured enemies and forcing them to perform the most dangerous tasks was often seen as practical. Over time, these practices evolved into many different forms, ultimately existing along a spectrum between traditional slavery and systems closer to serfdom.

A formal slave trade, however, did not originally exist. It was only with Nilfgaard's arrival in the northern islands that organized slave commerce emerged. Ironically, this development — alongside other factors — helped the central islands avoid direct conquest by both the Empire and Ofir, since in Nilfgaard's case purchasing slaves proved far cheaper than enslaving populations themselves. This trade also contributed to the rise of even more insular languages, as demographic shifts reshaped the cultural and linguistic landscape.

Societies

The societies of the Golden Islands vary greatly in how they are organized. While a strong feudal presence exists, it is not as dominant as one might expect, except within the Nilfgaardian and Ofiri-controlled territories. The most prevalent social model instead consists of alioisonomic societies, which resemble feudal systems on the surface but differ in several key ways. One major distinction is that the nobility holds no real privileges beyond prestige and the right to govern — though not direct control in the feudal sense. Rather than functioning as a rigid class, they act more like guides or coordinators, comparable to leadership roles found in less complex societies such as tribal communities.

Additionally, these societies typically possess only two or three estates, and they are highly fluid. This fluidity creates a near-egalitarian structure, as an individual's position depends on how many alliances they require to achieve their goals: the fewer alliances needed, the higher one stands within the social hierarchy. Because this changes over time, the system forms a social pyramid based not on vassalage but on prestige — reflected in the reduced need for alliances. Such prestige is earned primarily by bringing the greatest benefit to society or by resolving major collective problems. For this reason, they are often described as societies of equal alliances.

Most societies in the islands are human-dominated, with only a few being partially non-human. As far as is known, there are no fully non-human societies of significant influence within the archipelago.

Weapon Laws

Weapon laws vary from state to state across the islands, but in general, the carrying of weapons is permitted — though not indiscriminately. The right to bear arms is usually tied to one's profession.

For example, a fisher has the right to carry harpoons; a farmer may carry long weapons such as spears; a spy is permitted distance weapons like small crossbows or blowpipes; and a warrior may carry swords — but never weapons unrelated to their trade.

In this way, weapon ownership is not seen as a matter of personal freedom, but as a regulated extension of one's social function.

Writing System(s)

As with so many other aspects of the islands, it is impossible to define a single writing system, since numerous scripts coexist even within the same island.

However, one system stands out as particularly widespread — the closest thing the archipelago has to a lingua franca in written form: the Goldenese ideographic alphabet. This system, much like the custom of dyeing one's hair specific colors, is used to facilitate communication between speakers of different languages without the need for an intermediary, thanks to its broad ability to represent universally understood concepts.

Women's Rights and Sexual Minorities

Due to the harsh environment in which the societies of the Golden Islands developed, most of them are either patriarchal or matriarchal in structure, rooted in the perceived need to protect the one capable of bearing children from external dangers. This has resulted in certain social roles being restricted. However, this does not mean that women lack political weight, voice, or voting power, nor does it imply a patriarchal system in the more rigid western sense of the term. They do possess influence and agency. The limitation lies primarily in specific professions being considered "*off-limits for their own good.*"

As such, women commonly serve as midwives, medics, scribes, scholars, sailors, fishers, artisans, merchants, smiths, and many other roles. Men, on the other hand, tend to occupy professions deemed more dangerous or requiring greater physical strength. The only fundamental difference between patriarchal and matriarchal societies in the islands is the gender of the ruling authority — nothing more.

As for sexual minorities, their rights and social status vary so widely from one society to another that no clear generalization can be made.

Demographics

The islands maintain a low population density across most of their territory, with inhabitants largely concentrated in cities formed around the most important mines, coastal settlements, and towns or villages that have grown around newer mining sites. The total population is estimated at around 1,458,000 people, with the majority residing in the central islands as well as in the capitals and coastal

cities of the territories controlled by Nilfgaard and Ofir respectively.

People

For more information on the various ethnic groups of the Golden Islands, see Category: Ethnic groups of the Golden Islands

The exact number of ethnic groups present on the islands is unknown. Various estimates suggest that there may be as many groups as there are languages spoken. Even today, however, new groups continue to be discovered in remote areas as different forms of civilization expand across the Golden Isles, making it impossible to give a definitive figure.

Excluding the immigration brought by Nilfgaard and Ofir, as well as their descendants—both fully and partially mixed—the native population generally displays skin tones ranging from limestone to chocolate, including all shades in between. Hair is commonly curly in its many variations and appears in a wide array of colors, though brown-orange (not to be confused with chestnut) is the most prevalent. Eye shapes and colors vary greatly, with virtually every type represented. Height is equally diverse, with both very tall and very short individuals depending on the island or specific region visited.

Economy

Although the islands are highly fertile and possess an excellent climate for cultivating almost all kinds of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and crops—along with favorable conditions for livestock raising and fishing thanks to their surrounding waters—the richness of their soil in minerals and metals has led most of the economy to focus on extraction and export. As a result, the service and naval sectors hold the greatest weight after mining, largely due to the demands of overseas trade.

In fact, the islands contain roughly 10% of the world's gold reserves. Of the remaining 90%, about 80% belongs to Kovir, while the final 10% is distributed more or less evenly across the rest of the world. This immense wealth is precisely what has fueled both Ofir's and Nilfgaard's long-standing interest in gaining full control over the territory.

Etymology

Two of the three most widely used names originate from the mineral wealth the archipelago possesses, especially gold. The name Plebiloltaman, so popular among the natives, comes from the enormous ethnic and linguistic diversity of the islands, which — if it does not equal or surpass it — comes close to that of the Melukka Peninsula farther to the east.

Flora and Fauna

Like its peoples, languages, and cultures, the Golden Islands are a megadiverse territory in terms of flora and fauna, making it impossible to describe them in broad general terms. In this respect, the archipelago resembles Melukka — except that it lacks deserts, and the vast majority of its plant and animal life is native to the region, unlike the peninsula.

So pronounced is this endemism that it is estimated that around 99% of species are indigenous, with the remaining 1% consisting of invasive species unintentionally introduced by Nilfgaard and Ofir. Giant birds, such as ostrich-like species, appear to be particularly common throughout the archipelago.

Geography

The landscapes are extremely diverse and varied, although on some islands certain environments are more common than others. Nearly all of them possess steep valleys and inaccessible plains. In the mountains — most of which are extinct volcanoes characterized by dramatic changes in altitude — one can find sharp peaks, wide valleys, glaciers, tropical jungles, and newer volcanoes ranging from dormant to active that have emerged where smaller extinct volcanoes once stood. There are also lush green areas, high-mountain forests, and alpine plains.

Between the mountains and the coast lie mangroves, savannas, fertile alluvial riverlands, and dry-tropical forests. The only landscape that does not exist in the archipelago is true desert. The closest equivalent are the so-called drained lands: territories once contaminated by certain plant species that altered the environment to dominate it and avoid competition. After these plants were removed by various natural phenomena, the soil remained barren. When located within valleys, the microclimates they generate produce a “*reverse desert*” effect

— areas that are very cold during the day but extremely hot at night.

Magical Orography

The islands possess a significant number of Ley Lines of Earth and Water, along with a few of Fire originated from active volcanoes. As a result, their mages and other magical practitioners tend to specialize in, or draw primarily from, these types of magic.

As for para-elements, those most commonly encountered are combinations derived from the aforementioned elements.

Number of Islands

The archipelago is composed of forty-five islands in total, divided evenly between Ofir, Nilfgaard, and the insular states — fifteen, fifteen, and fifteen respectively.

Government (s)

The governments of the islands are as diverse as their people, making it impossible to define a single political system for the archipelago as a whole. The only certainty is that one of the most widespread forms of rule is the rotative monarchy. Unlike an elective monarchy, power in this system rotates between different noble houses according to a circular hierarchy that progresses from lesser to greater rank.

Noble houses continuously advance one position forward within this established order. As a result, the lesser outgoing monarchy assumes the place of the greater incoming one, a mechanism designed to prevent instability. This rotation replaces the need for a vote following the death, deposition, or abdication of the reigning monarch, as would occur in most elective monarchies.

Interaction with the Outside World

Beyond the slaves purchased by Nilfgaard, Goldenese people are most commonly seen in the ports of the Empire's southern continental edge, Barsa, northern Ofir, and Hannu, reaching as far as the Melukka Peninsula. Most of them are women, as in many island societies the profession of trade is considered

insufficiently masculine. These women primarily sell jewelry, metals such as the famed gold, precious stones, and intoxicating perfumes with exotic scents. For this reason, it is not uncommon to see them accompanied by mercenaries from their own islands or hired abroad.

Language (s)

Approximately 969 languages are spoken across the islands. In the central islands, there is no single official language assigned to each island as a whole; instead, official languages exist at the regional level within the various local polities that inhabit them. In the territories controlled by Ofir and Nilfgaard, the official languages are Ofiri and Nilfgaardian respectively. In addition to these 969 languages, numerous pidgins and creoles are also present. Being the most spoken the language, the one Nilfgaardians named as Juldian.

The only common linguistic pattern across the archipelago is the absence of a single de facto lingua franca per island. Instead, different lingua francas emerge depending on specific areas within an island or among clusters of nearby islands. Even in those islands formally governed by Ofir or Nilfgaard, real usage tends to follow this localized multilingual dynamic rather than a unified linguistic standard.

Political Composition

The islands form a vast archipelago which is itself divided into three sub-archipelagos, so to speak. These are what would de facto be the Jüld Insi, the northernmost islands controlled by Nilfgaard; Plebiloltaman, the central islands, disputed by both powers yet de jure and de facto remaining independent; and Altın Adalar, the southern islands, which are controlled by Ofir.

History

Very Ancient Times

In very ancient times, the islands were a single landmass, but the greatest eruption of the volcano known as Bikpela paia (Juldian: *The Great Fire)* triggered a series of extremely powerful earthquakes (certainly above magnitude 9). These events

unleashed massive tsunamis that submerged fragments of that original island, ultimately giving birth to the archipelago as it exists today.

Pre-Human Times

Before the arrival of humans, the islands were inhabited by the vrans, but their civilization collapsed, most likely due to the eruption of the previously mentioned volcano that gave rise to the archipelago. The survivors gradually devolved into a tribal state in the centuries following the event and later clashed with the next inhabitants, including several human groups, who would come to call them *masalai*. This conflict likely arose because many newcomers built their settlements atop the ruins of former vran cities.

Age of Migration

After the vrans, the islands came to be inhabited by the Aen Taoide, the *People of the Tide*— the Sea Elves, who, as in many other regions, established primarily trading outposts rather than permanent kingdoms. Most likely they arrived from farther north, more specifically from Mekan, choosing the area because of the great number of Ard Gaeths that could be used for multiversal trade.

During this period, it is probable that the rest of the non-human inhabitants of the islands also arrived, drawn mainly by commerce with the elves.

The Arrival of Humans

As in the rest of the world, humans arrived during the 230s Before the Resurrection with the First Conjunction of the Spheres. However, unlike in other regions, in the Golden Islands they arrived in great numbers, as multiple Ard Gaeths that brought them from different places opened across the area and, once the event ended and they closed, left them stranded within the territory.

It is unknown how many there were, but the name Plebiloltaman likely contains some truth — they were probably around one thousand people. Some scholars, however, argue that due to the immense ethnic and linguistic diversity of the islands, it may not have been a thousand individuals as such, but rather a thousand distinct ethnic groups which, faced with threats such as the new environment and the monsters brought by the First Conjunction, intermixing between communities, and many other factors, were reduced in number yet never fully homogenized, owing to the vast size and diversity of their original

ancestors.

After the Closing of the Ard Gaeths

Following the First Conjunction of the Spheres and the closing of the Ard Gaeths, almost all who remained on the islands — as happened elsewhere — departed to join the reorganization that would give rise to the Aen Fomuire under the guidance of the slightly insane Sage Balor. Only a few stayed behind, convinced that the High Doors might somehow be reactivated and that keeping a contingency plan was worth the risk.

The plan ultimately failed. However, it led the remaining elves to interact with the newly arrived humans, believing they might possess hidden knowledge capable of reopening the High Doors. That was not the case. Humans, who came to call them *nokoti* among other names, nonetheless developed a more or less cordial relationship with these elves, giving rise to the island's population of elves and half-elves. Over time, those who stayed grew increasingly distant from the Fomuire as the cultures of the various human ethnic groups influenced them. Slowly but inevitably, the elves who remained — and who did not later join the Great Sea Civilization of the merpeople after realizing humans knew nothing about reopening the High Doors— transformed into the Aen Oirere, the *People of the Coast*.

First Contact with the Outside World

The first contact between the Golden Islands and the outside world occurred roughly around the same period in which the taifa of Bukhala conquered the island of Mekan. In fact, five years after its conquest — that is, in the 10th century, around the 970s — a group of Barsameni fishermen were carried by ocean currents toward the islands and managed to return home with the help of the locals. Those fishermen would go on to name the territory Jazur Muneazila (Barsameni: The Isolated Islands).

Until that moment, contact had existed only among the different peoples of the archipelago itself. However, due to the vast distances and the maritime technology of the time, Bukhala did not attempt to conquer the islands, as maintaining control over them would have been too costly. Instead, they were kept as a commercial partner that could be visited.

This interaction triggered the beginning of a rapid Neolithic era in the islands —

which until then had been inhabited mainly by tribal societies. Following the discovery of metals, including gold, and after being taught their uses by the Barsameni, the islands underwent swift development, eventually reaching a level comparable to that of continental territories.

The Sistered Wars

However, not everything brought by the technological advancement introduced through the Bukhali proved beneficial. With progress came ambition, and with ambition arose desires for expansion — and with those desires, wars unlike anything the islands had previously experienced.

Thus began, from the late 10th century to the late 13th century, what would later be known as the Sistered Wars — so named because they occurred one after another without pause. These prolonged conflicts ultimately gave rise to the mosaic of states that now compose the territory of the Golden Islands.

Ofiri and Imperial Conquests

Indeed, it would be during this prolonged period of bloodshed that Nilfgaard carried out the conquest of the northern islands of the archipelago. After the capture of Mekan in 1222, the Empire learned of the islands' existence through the Mekanese. Claiming they were necessary for "*national security*" — just as Mekan had been — and motivated by the wealth described in records preserved from the era when the island had been under Bukhali control, Nilfgaard launched its campaign.

They managed to conquer only the northern islands, however, for it was then that the first alliance of the island states was formed. This alliance eventually sent delegates to the Old Continent, where they discovered Ofir — and in turn revealed the islands to the Ofiri. Mercenary forces from Ofir joined the locals, and together they halted further imperial expansion.

Yet Ofir at that time was not unified, and many of those mercenaries were driven by ambition. After the war with Nilfgaard ended, they rebelled and ultimately seized control of the southern islands themselves. Exhausted from the previous conflict and unable to secure a decisive victory in this new struggle, both the mercenaries and the alliance of islanders states agreed to a peace settlement.

The islands ruled by the Ofiri mercenaries did not remain independent for long. When Ofir unified in the 1250s, the new Ofiri state moved against them, and after

a swift campaign incorporated the southern islands into its territory, establishing the political situation that endures today. Control of the south has remained stable since then — not because of a lack of manpower for future wars of expansion, as had been the case for the mercenaries, but for reasons similar to why Bukhala never pursued full conquest.

The Second Conjunction of the Spheres

When the event took place in 1358, the Aen Oirere — still carrying the memory of their ancestors' original purpose on the islands — chose, like many other elven groups, to seize the opportunity. As soon as the Ard Gaeths opened once more, they departed toward a new reality.

Distant Future

By the time the glaciation that covered the entire northern hemisphere arrived, one of the few regions that emerged largely unscathed were the Golden Islands. Though altered by the changing world, they remained a thriving cradle of life. As a result, the name they had once borne gained an entirely new meaning.

Examples of Goldenese Names

It is impossible to define a single naming standard across the islands due to their vast diversity. The most common method — though still highly variable in its forms — consists of naming the newborn using a qualifying adjective and a descriptive one, which together create the given name.

As for structure, just as mentioned before, no precise pattern can be established. However, in many cultures there is a tendency to merge the names of the father and mother to form the surname or surnames. In cases of single parents, the name of the parent and that of a grandparent are often fused instead. If the remaining fragments from that first fusion are used, they may form a second surname.

A widespread belief holds that, because of how names are formed, both the given name and the surname(s) will ultimately shape the newborn's appearance and personality as they grow.

Male Names

Bikbun, Strongpaia, Hatsap, Olston, Truwin, Longwara, Smatblut, Dotiwara, Bikwin, Strongston, Gutpasin, Nogutbun, Klialeder, Biksan, Sotpelasap, Trupas, Hatpasin, Olsap, Smatston, Stronglait.

Female Names

Laitmun, Sofwara, Holiwara, Klianait, Braitlait, Likliksan, Gutgras, Nupelamun, Kliasan, Braitmun, Smatwin, Holisap, Sofleder, Laitwin, Gutblut, Liklikwara, Nupelalait, Trugras, Bikskel, Holinait.

Gender-neutral Names

Koniskel, Truwara, Braitston, Olwara, Nupelasap, Liklikpaia, Smatpasin, Bikais, Truleder, Holisun, Konipaia, Sotgras, Braitwin, Ollait, Smatlait, Stronggras, Kliskel, Bikpasin, Liklikbun, Nupelawin.

Monsters

Similar to what happens with its flora and fauna, the monsters of the islands are almost all unique, with a small number, in the case of monsters present in what is now unified Ofir, Zangvebar, and Barsa, which have unique adaptations to the environment. In addition, there are aquatic monsters that arrived in the territory after a long migration.

Non-humans

Aside from the elves, the islands are also home to the previously mentioned vran remnants, the olmeribilongwara (naiads), the nokoti — beings similar in appearance to leprechauns but unrelated — the nonos, creatures belonging to the korred monster family, and various merpeople along the coasts, especially the silk sirens, alongside ceacelias, antherions, the so-called kriesenmanmeri (creature-people), and more alien entities such as the fanguspika (speaker-fungi) or sponsinga (singer-sponge), among many other non-human races.

With the exception of the olmeribilongwara, ceacelias, and the merpeople — who likely originated from this world — most of the others probably came from different realities and became trapped here after the First Conjunction, ultimately being forced to make the islands their new home.

Notable Locations

For the full list of known Golden Islands Locations, see Category:Golden Islands Locations.

Citadels

- Haustrong

Cities

- Bluwol
- Karkosa
- Nupelahaus
- Prenmani

Cliffs

- Stonantap

Countries

- Bikples
- Emtinambis
- Munailan
- Namelwara

Jungles

- Busgrin
- Buspaia

Lakes

- Warablu

Lighthouses

- Hauslait

Mountains

- Mauntenklia

Sacred Places

- Plesholi

Thermal Springs

- Warahat

Volcanoes

- Mauntenpaia

Notable People

For the full list of known Goldenese, see Category:Goldenese.

Astrologers

- Bikbun Nupetru

Blacksmiths

- Holiwara Dotigut Warapasin

Merchants

- Olwara Konisot

Trivia

- The main inspiration behind the Golden Islands is Papua New Guinea[W]. However, since it is an extremely complex country, that inspiration has been kept intentionally vague to avoid creating a fantasy analogue that misrepresents it — something that often happens with fictional portrayals of real-world nations.

- The language used for the names of people, countries, and locations in the Golden Islands is none other than Tok Pisin[W], the creole language that serves as the country's lingua franca.
- Not all ethnic groups of the Golden Islands are Austronesian-inspired; rather, they draw from worldwide influences. Part of the concept was to create a territory that felt diverse in the broadest, almost "*American*" sense of the word, but without feeling forced — to show that such diversity can exist naturally. That is why the physical traits of the ethnic groups are somewhat limited and not simply "*inclusion for inclusion's sake*": in a pre-industrial and isolated environment (as has happened in many real societies), populations would tend toward mixing, and therefore toward gradual homogenization in certain aspects. So if you ever create something set here — which I absolutely encourage — keep this idea, and the core inspiration behind it, in mind.
- This expansion of Nátalam's geography — that is, the world of *The Witcher* — originated from a scene in the film *The Rats: A Witcher Tale*, part of Netflix's *The Witcher* "cinematic universe," in which a character with a Māori-like appearance appeared in the city of Amarillo, in Geso (which would be extremely rare — if not outright impossible — given that it is part of the Empire's northern provinces, and moreover an inland one).
- Another part of the inspiration comes from the Free City of Tyrosh, from the *A Song of Ice and Fire* universe, as well as from another place with Polynesian characteristics, Guam[W].
- Staurosist religions are my own creation, and they are based on a contrast exercise with secular religions[W] or philosophical religions. To clarify them, their name would translate as *vertical religions* (*staurós*) in Ancient Greek. This is due to their lack of metaphysical components. They function in the opposite way to cases like Buddhism, where there is no god, only the whole, and the need to escape the cycle of suffering. Here, instead, there is no heaven, hell, or metaphysical cycle, but there are divinities, and therefore a vertical relationship with the worshipper. A close real-world example — though it could also be considered secular — would be UFO religions[W]: in many of them there are no metaphysical components, yet there are still "*divine*" figures, namely the alien or aliens in question.
- The Goldenese ideographic alphabet would essentially be a highly expanded and medievalized version of emojis[W]. Emojis themselves are an ideographic system, though not one typically used as a full language.

breezewiki

BreezeWiki source code

Documentation and more information

Chat / Bug reports / Feature requests

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